

Ben grimaced at himself in the mirror. His mother had said that his teeth were crooked. She had said that she would have to take him to the dentist to get his teeth fixed. Ben could not see that his teeth were crooked. He could not see what the problem was.

The next day, Mom took Ben to the dentist. Ben smelled the smell that seemed to be in all dentist offices. Ben could not decide what the smell was. However, he decided there was no other smell quite like it. The dentist said that Ben's teeth were very crooked and that he would have to wear braces. Ben did not want to wear braces. He knew that the kids at school would laugh at him.

On Saturday, Ben went to the dentist to get a mold made of his mouth. The dentist put big plates full of a gooey kind of cement into his mouth. Ben felt like he could not breathe with the molds in his mouth. When the dentist took the molds out, Ben could see an imprint of his teeth in the mold.

The next week, Ben went back to the dentist to get the braces put on his teeth. The braces were silver and felt very heavy and tight on his teeth. Ben looked in the mirror. The braces looked very ugly to Ben! All he could see were two huge rows of metal in his mouth.

When Ben went to school the next day, he felt very embarrassed. He kept his mouth closed during the morning lesson. He hoped that no one would notice his braces. When it was time to eat lunch, however, he could no longer hide his braces. "Hey, Ben," yelled Tommy, "what do you have on your teeth?" Soon the other kids were crowding around Ben to see what Tommy was asking about. Ben could not hide his braces then. All of the kids had seen them.

However, a strange thing happened to Ben. Instead of making fun of him, the kids were nice about the braces. Some of the kids told Ben about when they had worn braces. Some of the kids told Ben that they wished they had braces to straighten their teeth. Ben did not feel bad about the braces anymore. He could see that the braces were for his own good after all.

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